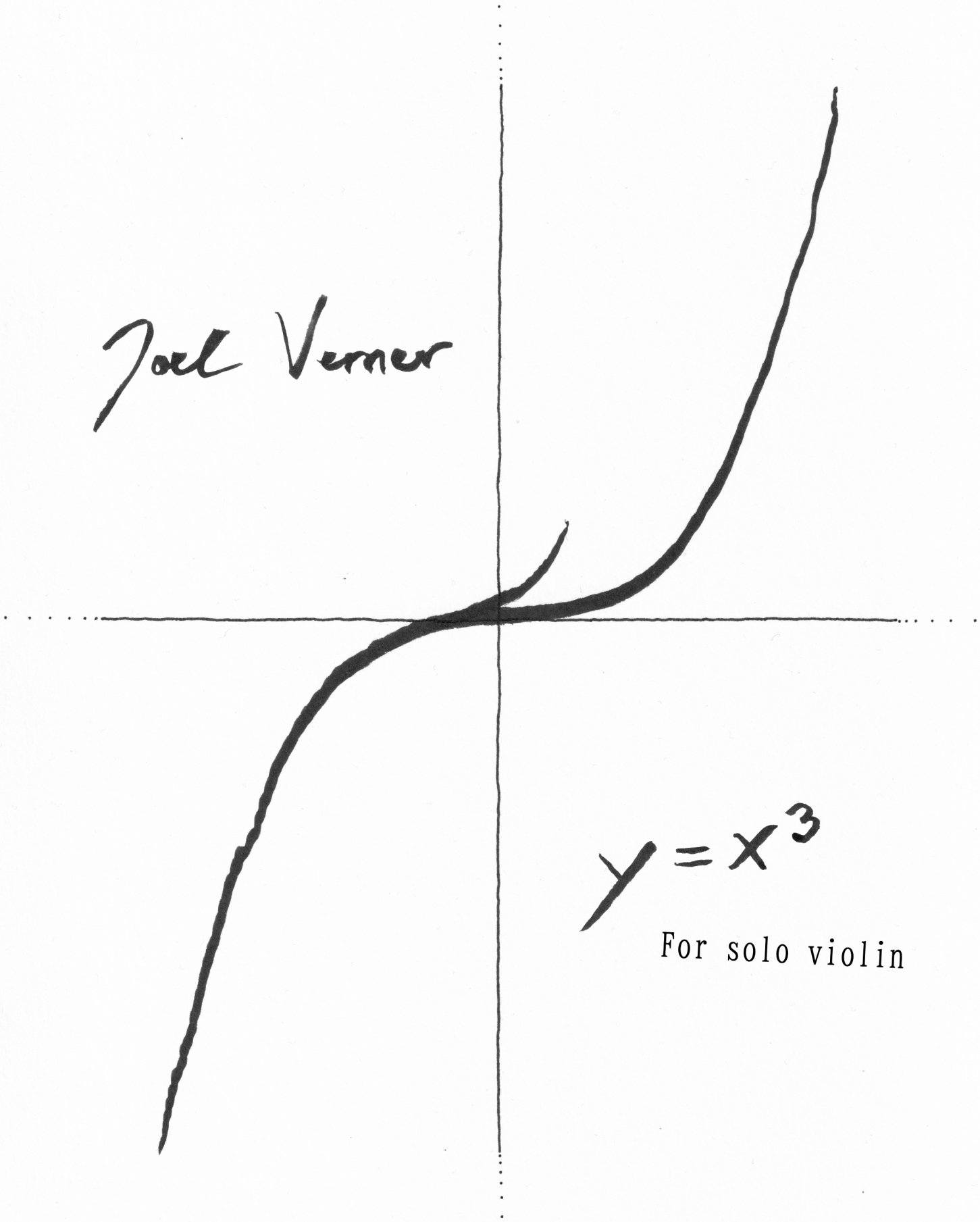


For solo violin

the reflection distorts my image
and I find comfort
in being seen

This work is released under
the CC BY 4.0 license.

For more information visit:
https://creativecommons.org

Cover design by Joel Verner

$y=x^3$

for solo violin

Joel Verner
2024, Helsinki

For Orest Smovzh

This miniature was written for violinist Orest Smovzh's *Condensed Music* project. In these Condensed music performances, Smovzh plays a litany of very short contemporary violin miniatures (under a minute in length) without breaks in between them. These performances have a very punk-rock DIY feel to them – an aspect that appealed to me a lot – so I knew immediately that I wanted my piece to be very fast and very noisy.

This piece is structured as an intentionally imperfect inverted palindrome. In addition to the pitches, the dynamics and playing techniques also become inverted halfway through. With this form, I wanted to explore the physical and sonic limits of the violin, as well as to emphasize the poetry that exists in the disconnect between written music and what an audience will experience: Something that is perfect in theory will not necessarily translate perfectly into praxis because of the idiosyncrasies – the unique qualities and limitations – of the instruments being used. But in my view, it is precisely this imperfection that makes the music interesting.

Explanatory notes

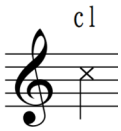
st – sul tasto, play near the fingerboard

mst – molto sul tasto, play almost on top of the fingerboard

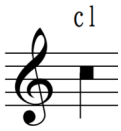
sp – sul ponticello, play near the bridge

msp – molto sul ponticello, play almost on top of the bridge

cl – col legno, play with the wooden part of the bow



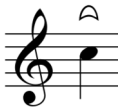
– col legno battuto, hit the string(s) with the wooden part of the bow

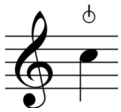


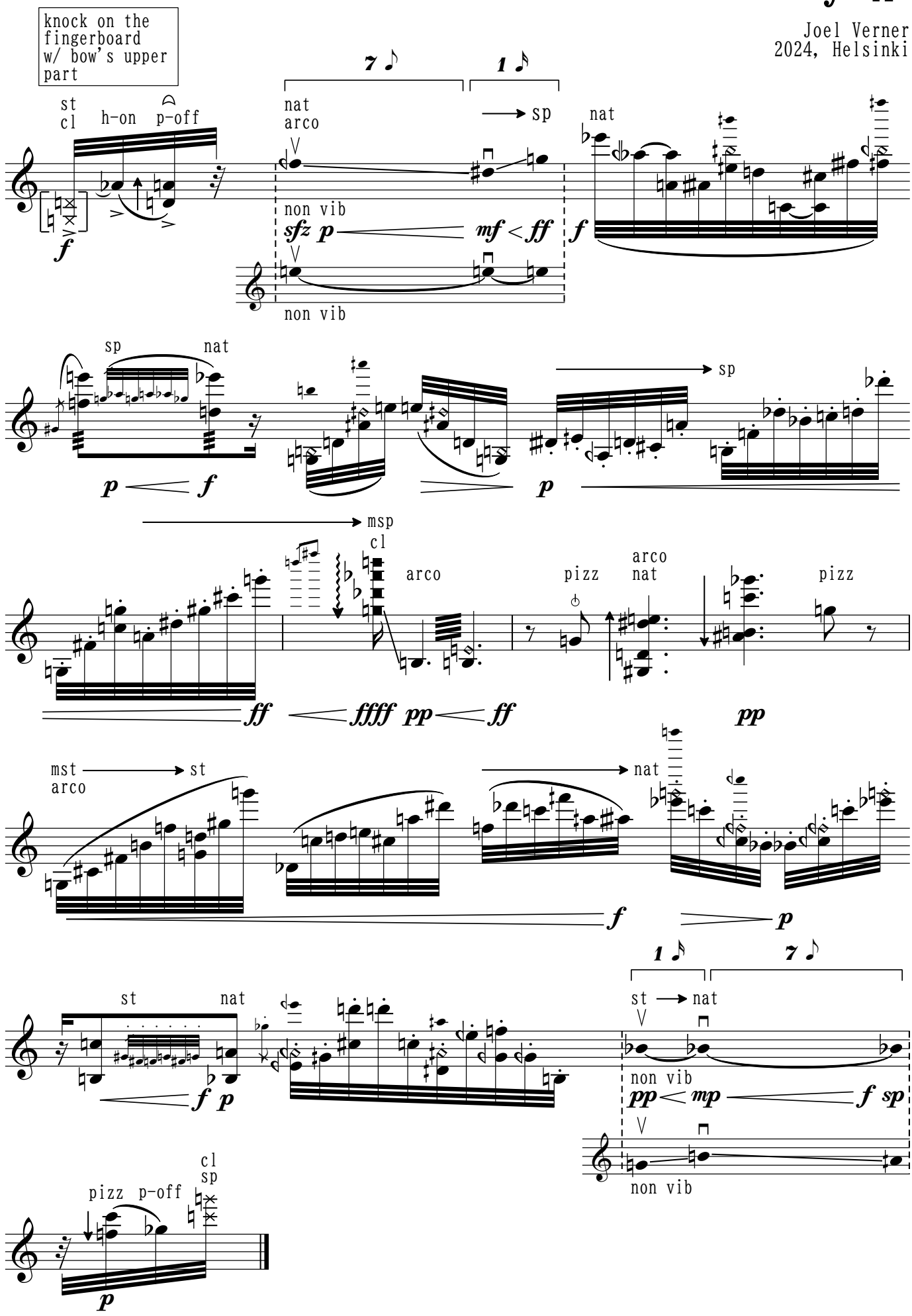
– col legno tratto, bow the string(s) with the wooden part of the bow

h-on – hammer-on, play a note by hammering your finger down on the fingerboard

p-off - pull-off, pluck a string by pulling your finger off the fingerboard

 - pluck the string with your nail

 - snap pizzicato, pluck the string with enough force that it snaps back and strikes the fingerboard

$y=x^3$

Joel Verner
2024, Helsinki